

## Abstract of the Invention

A method and system for controlling access to a telecommunications or computer network, such as the Internet, includes a user or computer terminal communicating with a gateway server. The method begins with identifying the user or computer terminal requesting access to the network. A profile for the requestor, including one or more access criteria, is accessed from a database. The gateway server determines whether the access criteria are met and access is allowed or denied. In an optional embodiment, the day and time of the request is compared to the predefined access periods. Optionally, the account billing information is additionally examined to determine whether the user has any time or credit remaining in the user's account. If the user's request has been made during one of the user's access periods and, optionally, the user has time or credit remaining in the user's account, access to the telecommunications or Internet system is allowed. Conversely, if the user has requested access outside the user's access period or, in an optional embodiment, if the user has no time, credit, or pre-paid money in the user's account, access is denied.